

Boston, Sept. 26, 1831.

My dear Sir:

I owe you a great debt, and many thanks, for your interesting letter, which was duly received and perused with avidity. Nevertheless, I wish to add to the score of my obligations.

You have had an unexampled riot at Providence — unexampled, ~~at least~~, in New-England. As it will hardly be possible to obtain the facts from the newspapers as they really occurred, I beg you to favor me, by Wednesday, with replies to the following questions:

Who were the originators of the disturbance — the ^{sailors} ~~relations~~ or the blacks?

Were the sailors seeking an illicit intercourse with the blacks?

What was the cause of the riot?

How many houses occupied by colored people have been injured? how many destroyed?

What are the feelings of a majority of the inhabitants towards the blacks?

How many were killed and wounded?

Any additional information will be thankfully received.

These are perilous times, my dear friend, especially for the people of color. So infuriated are the whites against them, since the Virginia and North Carolina insurrections, that the most trifling causes may lead to a war of extermination. Bloody scenes, I fear, are in reserve for our vision; but I pray God that the late events may be overruled for good.

Perhaps the colored people ^{in Providence} were entirely to blame — perhaps partially so, or entirely innocent. No doubt they will be deeply implicated, whether innocent or guilty. I wish to know the truth — nothing more. Shall I hear from you on Wednesday?

In great haste, I remain,

Yours, truly,

Wm. Lloyd Garrison.

See Lib. i.
H. 159.164



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Mr Henry E. Benson,
Providence, R.I.

William Lloyd Garrison
Sept 26th 1831
(Boston)